

## HOME READING.

## Things Unfinished.

Today is gone,  
A day is ended;  
It seems, at all;  
I failed to fall,  
To stir my brain,  
To think in vain.

A book is worn,  
The page was born;  
The waiting tasks  
I shall not ask,  
Rewards will be given,  
Easily out of heaven.

The world is still,  
There shall be fleet;  
The broken clue,  
The true is true;  
The falsehood's aim  
Shall start his good name.

Half bare his arm with light,  
And send him all the night;  
The sun and winter's storm  
All his will perform,  
Enough for them  
Such service to force.

E. R. Sill, in the Atlantic.

## Sea Yarns.—No. 16.

BY ENTHOO.

At 8 o'clock a ship hove in sight, and as she would pass near us, the captain got out his signal, and he was told, that it was an international code of signals by all nations, to be used at 8 o'clock a captain can talk with another vessel just as readily telegraph by the use of a cipher. The flags used are of various combinations of the colors red, white, and yellow. Each flag stands for a letter of the alphabet, and flags come a book or "key," containing hundred combinations of letters, representing some word or sentence. Each nation has a register of vessels, and in the case of a vessel sailing under the nation's flag, its combination of letters peculiarly.

Most captains carry the register of their nation only, hence cannot tell if a foreign vessel from the flags if this is the reason why the names "spoken" at sea are so often newspaper reports, and only the names that were used in the signal, signifying the captain fastened the American flag to the peak and below it the signal pennant, a singular flag of alternate red and white stripes. This meant "An vessel wants to signal you." The ship then hoisted his ensign (the flag) and the signal pennant which thus became the answering signal, meaning "An English vessel wants to speak to you." Our flags were hoisted, and the letters J. P. L. W. This combination gave the name.

Other flags were then shown—part of departure and our destination, signifying the vessels were sailing, and the time we were off this island. We sailed ignominiously, and the less said about that, the better. But in order to give a clear idea of the annoyance these creatures can be, in my next I will quote, somewhat at length, from a capital article that appeared in "Chamber's Journal" in 1866, entitled "My Cabin Mates and Bedfellows."

On the 25th of March, we were in the vicinity of the Cape Verde Islands, off the coast of Africa. Saint Vincent, the chief island, is remarkable in many ways. As you approach it, it has the appearance of a huge, black, cinder, and is in fact the remains of a burning mountain, the fires of which have been exhausted for want of fuel, and left behind only blackened, charred rocks and ashes. One of these rocks is a perfect bust picture of George Washington; one can fancy, when looking at it, that the hair, face, neck and shoulders, and even the frayed shirt-front, are all perfectly delineated.

Forlorn and dismal as the islands look at a distance, they are nevertheless extremely fertile, and are famous, the world over, as fruit markets. A half-dozen oranges cost but a cent, and bananas are as plentiful as apples are generally in the United States. But aside from all this are their wonderful flocks of parrots. No sooner does a vessel anchor at St. Vincent, than the ears of all on board are pierced by the shrill cries of hundreds of these birds that are brought out for sale in boats that surround the vessel. Talking, except by yelling, is simply impossible, owing to the uproar. The gray parrots are the best talkers, and the green ones sell more readily, owing to their bright plumage.

On the 5th of April, we were even with the group of seven islands called the Canaries, or Canary Islands. Lanzarote, the most northern, has a mountain, Montana Blanca, two thousand feet high, that is cultivated to its very summit. There was for nearly, on the eastern side, a cove called Janubio, once a harbor for small vessels; but in 1765 an eruption took place and an outer barrier was formed, which converted the harbor into a salt water lake. Another of the islands, called Alleganza, is composed entirely of lava and cinders, the remains of an extinct volcano. The edge of the crater is two-thirds of a mile across. Its bottom is cultivated for barley. Canaries, or Grand Canary, is the grand granary of the Canarian Archipelago. Tenerife, about sixteen leagues from Canaria, is a remarkable object. Seen from a distance, it appears to have once been one complete cinder, and looks half-consumed coke.

On the 6th, we passed the Island of Madeira, which is of volcanic origin, though the only sign of a crater is on San Antonio, a mountain, 5,176 feet high, near Machico, at the east end of the island. The island is a collection of mountains, the highest of which, the Pico Ruivo, 6,056 feet, is near its centre. To the west of it is the ridge of the Lomba Grande, of nearly equal height, extends for two and a half miles, and forms the north end of the vast and remarkable ravine of the Curral, one of the marvels of the Madeira.

Funchal, the capital of Madeira, was thus named in 1419 by Gonzales Zarco, who first landed there, from the quantities of fennel growing there.

Writing of Madeira reminds me of the war of extermination that the captain and I began against the reaches aboard ship at the time we were off this island. We failed ignominiously, and the less said about that, the better. But in order to give a clear idea of the annoyance these creatures can be, in my next I will quote, somewhat at length, from a capital article that appeared in "Chamber's Journal" in 1866, entitled "My Cabin Mates and Bedfellows."

## Robeson's Story of Grant.

"When I was secretary of the navy some hundreds of the sailors of the better class came to me and asked to have some rank given them. They didn't care don't an increase of pay, they said, but they wanted relative rank."

"I couldn't do anything for them, but they came several times, and were rather importunate, and I finally led a delegation of them over to the White House, and let them present their petition to President Grant in person. They told him what they wanted, and argued for a redress of their grievances plainly but forcibly."

"At last an old boatswain came to the front, and hitching up his trousers and turning over his incumbent quid, he said: 'Mr. President, I can put this 'ere matter so's you can see it plain. Now here I be—a parent; in fact a father. My son is a midshipman. He outranks me, don't you oblige me?'

"Indeed," said Grant, "who appointed her a midy?"

"The secretary here," the bosun said, "encouraged by the question, he went on: 'It ain't right, don't you see, that I should be beneath 'im? W. V. If I was to go on his ship the boy I brought up to obedience would boss his own father! Jest think of that! Ah, he has better quarters 'n me, and better grub, nice furnitur', an' all that; sleeps in a nice soft bed 'n that. See?'

"Yes," the president said; "yes, the world is full of inequalities. I know of a case quite similar to yours."

"The old bosun chuckled quietly, and gave another hit to his lower gear."

"I know of an old fellow," said Gen. Grant, "who is postmaster of a little town in Kentucky. He lives in a plain way in a small house. He is a nice old man but isn't much in rank. His son outranks him more than your son does you. His son lives in Washington, in the biggest house there, and he is surrounded by the nicest furniture, and drinks and eats anything he takes a notion to. He could remove his father from office, in a minute if he wanted to. But he doesn't want to. And the old man—that's Jesse Grant, you know—doesn't seem to care much about the inequality in rank. I suppose he is glad to see his boy get along in the world."

"The old boy looked down at the carpet and tried to bore a hole in it with his toe, and his comrades all laughed at him joyously, and slapped him on the back and filed out in great glee. It was the last I ever heard of the petition or the petitioners. The old bosun flung his end into a chest as he left. Probably he had concluded to give up thinking."

Now that the cool weather has crowded the fashionable thoroughfares and driven club men back to town, the Fifth avenue windows of the Union again resemble a country schoolhouse when the circus is passing—a head for nearly every pane of glass is visible to passers-by.

General George H. Thomas' widow will make Washington her permanent home in the future, and has already begun the erection of a residence there.

## Lyddy Ann.

The intelligence office was crowded upon this bright June day. There were more girls' there with the hard, insolent look which only becomes developed by the long and successful badgering of defenseless "missuses;" there were young girls, who had sat behind the doors, and sat unnoticed on the edges of the chairs, and turned as red as peaches if anyone spoke to them unexpectedly; there were fat cooks out of place; and slim, gentle waitresses, who had made up their minds to "honor themselves." There were the votaries of incompetency, who saled under the banners of "General Household," and the giant females who called themselves "children nurses." But not one of the spring crowd would consent to go out into the country with Mrs. Allendale, to do the housework of her brother Reuben.

"But it's a light place," appealed Mrs. Allendale, looking helplessly around. "My brother and his invalid daughter. A lovely farm on the Lehigh River, with all sorts of fruit and splendid scenery; and the healthiest air in the world; and he'll pay sixteen dollars a month to anyone who gives satisfaction."

But still an ominous silence prevailed in the ranks.

"I'm sorry, ma'am," said the superintendent, in an apologetic tone; "but you see all the helpswives has such an objection to the country."

And Mrs. Allendale was just turning away in despair, when a pretty, pink-cheeked young girl, neatly dressed in brown calico, came out of the crowd.

"If you think I would do ma'am—"

Silence.

Mrs. Allendale's despondent face brightened up, and she began asking questions at once.

The pretty girl's name was "Lyddy Ann." She was eighteen; she had lived out before; her reference was Mrs. General Sumpter, who resided at No. 19 Passiflora Court.

Oh yes, of course, Mrs. Sumpter would testify to her character!

And she would meet Mrs. Allendale at the three forty train that afternoon to accompany her to the country.

"I am so pleased!" thought Mrs. Allendale, as she tripped lightly away from the intelligence office. "The girl has such a pretty, modest face, and she seems so willing to learn anything that she did not already know; and now for Mrs. General Sumpter, it's a mere form, after all;

Lyddy Ann's face is her best reference."

No. 19 Passiflora Court was a stucco house, in some fashionable street, finished in colors that made the eyes ache.

Mrs. General Sumpter was a stern, middle-aged matron, in plum-colored satin and diamonds which were almost too large and brilliant to be real.

"Lyddy Ann?" said she, raising the eyebrows which art had pencil into perfect arches. "Oh yes,—she lived with me a year. She is a most excellent girl. I am pleased to be able to recommend her in all respects. You'll please leave me your address, ma'am. I am always so interested to hear about a girl who once lived with me."

"Oh, I dare not!" shuddered Lyddy Ann.

"Then I will," said Mrs. Allendale.

And when next the girl met Uncle Reuben, he held out both his hands to her with a smile.

"Don't run away from me, Lyddy Ann," he said. "I know it. And I love you better than ever, my dear. Come, you won't get away from me now until you name the wedding-day."

And what was left? Lyddy Ann but to consent?

Mrs. Gen. Sumpter came down the very next week, boiling over with rage that her exorbitant demands had not been satisfied.

"Sir," she said to the honest farmer, "I have to tell you that—"

"And I," said Uncle Reuben, "have to tell you that if you can't get out of this house before another 6 months are over, you'll be put out of it."

"I'm going to marry this little girl, an' whover has a word to say against her just s'ittle with me!"

"So Mrs. Gen. Sumpter, as compelled to withdraw her forces, in great discomfiture and Lyddy Ann's doing, general house-work now in her own home, with a husband who adores her, and a step-daughter who thinks the world does not contain her equal."

"I do not remember the time," he said, "when I did not earn my living. My first occupant was driving the small birds from the turn field and the rooks from the peas. When I first trudged a field, with my wooden bottle, I'd scratch slugs over my shoulder, but the few seeds of judicious instruction society doled out to him fell upon good ground, and were ripened by processes of self-help—more effectual than any school exercises. And in tracing these the reader will find much that will be to him, perhaps, self-helpful and suggestive.

First, as far as his boy, then as attorney's clerk,—from holding a plough to driving a scull, as the author puts it—then as a soldier, but not "ful" of strange oaths, "again,

as a teacher and author, and still again as a country gentleman, in possession of a fine estate and an ample income!" and finally, "last scene of all this strange, eventful history," as an ardent social reformer, pointing the way to social progress and leading it. Cobbett rolled out to its fullest scope a life of eminent usefulness as a fearless and great social, political and religious controversialist.

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